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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0159
INFO RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RHMCSUU/FBI WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC PRIORITY
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RUEPINS/HQ BICE INTEL WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 001539

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PM/DTCC - BLUE LANTERN COORDINATOR

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/21/2012
TAGS: [KU](#) [KOMC](#) [ETTC](#)
SUBJECT: BLUE LANTERN LEVEL 3: PRE-LICENSE CHECK ON
APPLICATION 050057754

REF: SECSTATE 135045

Classified By: Acting Deputy Chief of Mission Tim Lenderking for Reason
s 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) In response to reftel, econoff visited Al-Hadaf Hunting and Equestrian Equipment on 4 October and met with the company's sole proprietor, Ali Al-Sanea, a retired protocol officer from the Amiri Diwan (the office of Kuwait's Head of State). Al-Sanea said the Al-Hadaf company, established by his grandfather, has been in business for sixty years selling weapons, ammunition, and other hunting gear to licensed hunters on a retail basis. Al-Hadaf operates three retail locations (all in Kuwait), two in Farwaniya and one in Mangaf. According to the owner, the company sells mostly shotguns (100-200 per year) and cartridges. Al-Sanea said he only sells three to five rifles per year. He said Al-Hadaf also sells pistols, but only to "VIPs," which he defined as royal family members. The weapons he sells are manufactured by Winchester, Remington, Mossberg, Browning, Weatherby, Glock, etc. He said he usually purchases U.S.-made weapons from third-party sellers based outside the U.S., mostly from Europe and Australia. Al-Sanea mentioned that Al-Hadaf would be participating in the Abu Dhabi Hunting and Equestrian Exhibition on October 24.

¶2. (C) Al-Sanea insisted that Al-Hadaf only sells to customers with valid licenses issued by the Ministry of Interior (MOI). He said that many MOI officers are also customers of Al-Hadaf and an MOI inspector visits Al-Hadaf every Monday to review its books. He showed econoff sales records going back at least three years with entries that include the date and place of sale; the name, license number, and civil ID number of the customer; and the make, model, and serial number of the item purchased. He also showed econoff the purchase order and import license that pertain to the thirty .22 caliber Henry Survival Rifles. From a layman's perspective, all the documents and sales records presented appeared to be in order.

¶3. (SBU) The main Al-Hadaf shop in Farwaniya, the only one visited by Econoff, was outfitted with retractable metal shutters to cover the windows, at least six security cameras, and an installed motion detector and alarm system. All of the cabinets containing weapons or ammunitions were locked, but many of these locks and containers seemed to provide only weak protection. Al-Sanea said that MOI police patrols regularly pass by the shop after hours. He said the other two Al-Hadaf shops incorporate the same security features.

¶4. (SBU) Al-Sanea said that Kuwait serves as a regional center for retail weapons and ammunition sales to Gulf hunters because the retail sale of weapons is banned in other Gulf countries. He said there are fourteen companies in Kuwait that serve the Gulf hunting market. He added that most of his customers do their hunting in Sudan, Syria, and Lebanon. Al-Sanea said that his most important customers include members of the royal families of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, and the UAE, many of whom are old acquaintances from his time as protocol officer in the Amiri Diwan. In some cases these royals come to Kuwait to shop for and purchase weapons and ammunition which Al-Hadaf then ships to them in their home countries. (Note: It is not clear to Econoff whether this practice is a violation of the prohibition on the re-export of USML items.)

¶5. (U) Due to scheduling challenges posed by Ramadan work routines in Kuwait, Econoff has not yet been able to arrange a meeting with the relevant MOI official to confirm that the GOK has no derogatory information on Al-Hadaf. The results of this meeting, once it takes place, will be reported septel.

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